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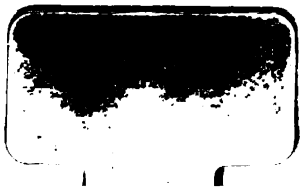

from the Au.

5

MOSES

VIEWING THE PROMISED LAND.

A

SEATONIAN PRIZE POEM.

Gough Add. Cantbr.
4°. 11.

BY

THE REV. CHARLES HOYLE, M.A.

OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

DESPEXIT TERRAS PENITUS PENITUSQUE JACENTES.

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22.

WE, the Underwritten, do assign Mr. SEATON's Reward, for the Year 1804, to the Rev. CHARLES HOYLE, M.A. of *Trinity College*, for his Poem on MOSES VIEWING THE PROMISED LAND; and direct the said Poem to be printed, according to the tenor of the Will.

M. DAVY, Vice-Chancellor.

J. TORKINGTON, Master of Clare Hall.

Cambridge,
Nov. 2, 1804.

MOSES VIEWING THE PROMISED LAND.

Despexit terras penitus penitusque jacentes.

NEBO, and thou the consecrated top
Of Pisgah, hail! hail, cloud-capt pinnacles,
By mortal tread inviolate, or by haunt
Of bestial kind, though facile in ascent
To whom Omnipotence devoted leads
For sacrifice! Wild regions; yet to me
Nor waste nor solitary, who discern
Celestial presence here, while radiant choirs
Of Cherubim with gratulation cheer
My parting soul. O mountains! and ye vales,
That, orient stretch'd in longitude, salute
Approaching day, your fields and spicy groves,
On which I ling'ring gaze, these closing eyes

Shall see no more. Thou too, the fatal Rock
Of Meribah, contention rightly call'd,
Sad monument of my offence, receive
This last farewell: thy rugged sides I smote
Misdoubting, till the gushing stream reprov'd
My causeless fear, and impious, that arraign'd
Eternal mercy: whence the just decree,
That never may this foot unblest pollute
The Promis'd Land. Here consummation waits
My pilgrimage, yet gives me to behold
The rich inheritance of old confirm'd
To Abraham's progeny; whose goodly tents,
And tabernacles fair, th' unwilling son
Of Beor erst by revelation nam'd,
Blessed of God. For ever blessed they,
Who in the shadow of Jehovah's power
Faithful abide. To thee my soul aspires,
Creator of all worlds! propitious hear
Thy suppliant; and with arm invincible,
Through death's mysterious gates, and vale obscure,
Conduct to mansions of unfading light,
Where everlasting hallelujahs fill
Heaven's concave, and the plenitude of joy
Triumphant in thy presence ever reigns.

So spake the patriarch, whose uplifted rod
Midway had cleft the billows and the storm
Of Erythrean deeps; who forty years
Had led, and nourish'd in the wilderness,
Rebellious Israel. Twice twelve lustres now
His flowing locks had silver'd; yet with eye
Unclouded, and with unabated force,
He scal'd the rocky steeps, his place ordain'd
Of flight to Paradise. Not wav'ring he
In faith, nor in unmanly fears dissolv'd,
(The Rabbins' vain surmise,) but arm'd secure
In penitential hope, and well prepar'd
For dissolution nigh. Thus not alone,
Though single, but with thoughts accompanied
Of unimaginable joy sublime,
He prest the mountain summit, and survey'd
The wide spread tents beneath of Isaac's seed,
Whitening the plain. With tears of parting love,
And arms uplifted, fervent he pronounc'd
His vows paternal, and the pastoral prayer
Of benediction; then, far-gazing round,
Bewilder'd in delight awhile remain'd;
So vast, so various, beautiful and gay,
The prospect show'd: Here pleasant woods and dales,

Where half-disclos'd, half-viewless, many a stream,
In sweet mæanders ling'ring, silent draws
His silver train: here sunny lawns supine,
Where flocks and herds innumerable graze
The tender blade: here upland arable,
With golden harvest rich: here loftiest hills,
Darken'd with morning clouds, their swelling breast
With crags and purple heath diversified,
And torrent cataracts of misty foam
And thund'ring sound; while westward, distant seen
Along th' horizon blue, old Ocean spreads
His ample wave: Here Jordan's cleansing flood,
By Gilgal; there expanse of waters calm,
An inland sea, in after times the bed
Of navies tall: Nor wanted, vineyards, groves,
And works of busy art, majestic fane
Or palace, clust'ring hamlet, lonely tower,
And goodly cities, whose proud battlements
Ascend to heaven. While thus stood Amram's son,
Deep silence chain'd the winds; a sacred calm
All nature hush'd; huge Nebo to his base
Shook without sound; of present Deity
Undoubted sign: when, lo, a still small voice
To dread communion thus the Prophet calls:—

" Peace be upon thee! never-changing peace
Thy labours crown! From frail mortality
Soon disencumber'd, shall thy spirit soar
To its empyreal throne. Meantime receive
Thy latest earthly wish; and, looking round
To the four winds, in smiling circuit view
The Promis'd region, fraught with mineral store,
Flowing with milk and honey; nor surpast
By ought terrestrial, save the garden bliss
Of primal Eden. Nor alone admire
Extent of land and water; but discern
The future habitants: for on thy sight
Are pictur'd years to come, and in thine ears
Familiar sound of person and of place,
Names yet unknown; while to remotest bounds
Of Israel's heritage, thy visual orbs,
Bath'd in the well of life, ken unconfin'd.
Lo, to the west and south the valiant sons
Of Naphthali o'er nineteen cities hold
Dominion, and with large prosperity
Replenish'd reign. Unstable Reuben dwells
On this side Jordan, in ignoble ease
Reclin'd, and list'ning to the bleating flocks;
But slow to bold emprize. Next him the tribe

Of Gad, for equity and justice fam'd,
With Machir's seed divided empire claim
O'er Gilead. Ephraim, stretching to the sea
His branches, in supreme and palmy state
Exalted, blooms: So on the favour'd head
Of Joseph, sever'd once by causeless ire
From his injurious brethren, precious dews
Of heaven, and treasures of the depths beneath,
And blessings numberless, all plenty pour,
Felicity, and wealth, and jubilee
Of strength victorious. Asher dips his foot
In purest oil; and with parental love
His smiling progeny to stately Tyre
And flowery Carmel leads. Zebūlun wields
His thirsty falchion; and the crested pride
Of Sisera, and of Jabin, Canaan's king,
Sinks to the dust: While peaceful Issachar,
In tributary sloth content resides,
Peopling a fertile land. O'er narrow bounds
Indignant leaping, Dan from Bashan's hill
Springs as a lion's whelp; unwelcome guest
To Leshem, whose embattled towers confess
Resistance vain. In borrow'd strength secure,
Simeon, beneath defence of Judah's shield,

Contented sleeps. But Benjamin exults
In mailed might: Behold him, as the voice
Of Jacob erst declar'd, to deeds of war
Impetuous haste; at earliest morning rous'd
To din of conflict, furious to devour
The trembling prey; nor till the shades of night
Arrest his rage, content to seek repose,
Recount his conquest, and divide the spoil.
Last, Judah dwells from Ekron to the verge
Of Edom, and from yon asphaltic lake
Westward to th' ocean stream: from age to age
He gathers strength, and from the Jebusite
A mountain wins, whereon the sacred domes
Of fair Jerusalem shall glorious rise
In sanctitude august; within whose courts
The long array of Levi's hallow'd sons
Adoring bends, while Aaron's priestly line
O'er worship and o'er sacrifice preside.
So royal Judah, in dilated might,
Superior stands; and, giant-like, bestrides
The prostrate Philistine; or, couching, lies
In lion-slumber, 'neath the vineyards' shade,
Mid lowing herds, beside the murm'ring stream:
And who shall wake him from his dread repose?—
Thus hast thou seen the long-foretold domain,

Jeshurun's lot, where overshadowing might
Of Spirit Divine from generation dwells
To generation; ever sure defence
Of Israel, once a feeble stranger known
Midst hospitable Egypt; next opprest
With toil, and servitude's more galling chain,
Disconsolate, despairing; till redeem'd
By the right hand of Power: now as the stars
Of heaven in multitude, and as the flame
Driven by tempestuous winds, in ruin vast
Devouring hosts and kingdoms. At rebuke
Of one a thousand flee; and nations arm'd
Flee at rebuke of five. Look, and prepare
For signs portentous, evidence and seal
Of aid concomitant, o'erruling power,
In succour swift, that still with conquest leads
Thy brethren militant from realm to realm,
Till all their wand'rings, all their wars, subside,
In full possession, and in peace secure.

" See first the horned might of Jordan's flood,
Swoln by autumnal rains, in deluge foam
O'er all his banks, and passage wish'd deny
To Abraham's race; till in their front advanc'd
The consecrated Ark, by Levite hands

With rev'rence borne, their dubious footsteps guides,
And through the storm of adverse element
Prepares their way: See how the downward flood,
As smitten with annihilation, bares
A broad highway; while backward driven above,
The torrent surges pil'd in liquid wall,
O'erarch'd impend, and safe the myriads tread
The path profound: till, from the further shore,
With awful adoration they behold
The fetter'd waters with permissive haste,
And renovated might, their course resume.
A warning sign (could warning signs impede
The sinner's fate) to yonder walls condemn'd,
Of Jericho, in martial pride that frown,
Girt with luxuriant palms, well-water'd shades,
Where mirth voluptuous, sensual sloth reside,
Till scar'd by din of arms and peril nigh,
As round the hostile city Israel winds
His long procession. Hark! the trumpets' clang,
And pealing shouts, denouncing instant woe
To Canaan's sons: lo, smitten without hands,
The towers and massy wall (impregnable
How fondly deem'd) in sudden thunder fall
With prodigy of ruin, shaking earth,
And dark'ning air! Thy kindred host ascend

Wide-wasting; universal havoc reigns;
And soon the guilty mansions disappear,
Plough'd by the vengeful sword, and wrapt in fire.

" The mountain Amorites' unwieldly war
Five monarchs lead: their pageant state behold,
Their pomp barbaric, chariots, horsemen, arms,
As vultures fierce, as locusts numberless,
Ravening as wolves! See Nave's son oppos'd,
Confiding in his God, intrepid wage
Unequal war, and not in vain confide:
For panic-struck, the foe by Gibeon flies
Discomfited, and whirlwinds of dire hail,
Light'ning and tempest, mingling in the fight,
Blast the pale fugitives. Receives thine ear
That potent voice, or knows th' accustom'd sound?
'Tis Joshua bids. 'Thou sun, on Gibeah stand;
Thou in the vale of Ajalon, O moon!'
The sun descends not, and the moon stands still,
Obedient; till with battle and pursuit
Satiate, Jeshurun's host his wrongs avenge.

" But now with conquest and with plenty crown'd,
In full fruition, careless ease unmann'd;
Revolted Israel, of Jehovah's might

Forgetful, woos, with alienated heart,
Idolatries, abominations foul,
Of neighbouring foes, and, justly to the scourge
Of Amalek and Midian sold, deplores
A land impoverish'd, and the ling'ring pains
Of famine and disease: contrition bends
Each stubborn knee, and late repentance mourns
On every tongue;—nor Heaven disdains to hear.
See from Manasseh the deliverer spring,
Undaunted Gideon: he by night destroys
The grove of Baal, next by trumpet calls
The sons of Abiezer: Naphthali,
Zebūlun, Asher, and Manasseh, join
His rustic banners, ardent all, and bold
In freedom's cause. Yet not to these is given
The victory, lest presumptuous man ascribe
To mortal arm the glory ever due
To God Most High: three hundred men alone,
A chosen band, by heaven-appointed sign
Predestin'd to subdue, in silent march
To Midian's camp, Jerubbaal darkling leads:
He comes, he sees, he conquers; fear confounds
The rout idolatrous, where wild uproar
Spreads uncontroll'd; against his fellow each
Uplifts the sword; and universal flight,

In shame, despair, perdition beyond cure,
Their hope confounds: He onward drives the storm
Of slaughter; Zeba and Zalmunna slain,
Oppression baffled, Israel's peace restor'd,
Reward his labours and attest his fame.

"Whom seest thou next? a stripling, ruddy, fair,
Unarm'd, unaided? He with sling and stone
Subdues the vaunting giant, and illumes
With warlike joy, and leads to victory,
Desponding Israel: he mature in age,
And exercis'd in suffering, shall assume
His destin'd eminence, in Hebron hail'd
Anointed King. Yon spot remote behold,
Baal-perazim: there his fury smites
The Philistines, auspicious presage given
Of long prosperity: wide he extends
His royalties, and still the throne adorns
With piety and mercy. Lov'd and fear'd,
Twice twenty years with equitable hand
He sways the sceptre: then in peace repose
His ashes, but his name lives evermore.

"In wealth, in power, tranquillity, and fame,
His mightier son, high-favour'd Solomon,

Serene in strength, and dreadful without war,
Reigns jubilant: in knowledge peerless he,
With proverb, meditation, holy song,
Exalts the soul; while o'er his laws preside
Truth uncorrupt, integrity severe,
By keen discernment led. With lustrous train
See Sheba's queen, to prove his wisdom, come;
And kings from every realm, admiring, hear
His varied eloquence; admiring, view
Magnificence and regal state, profuse
Beyond compare. Memorial of his zeal,
The temple tow'rs, a sculptur'd city gay,
Of marble, cedar, gold. Observe the Feast
Of Dedication, where, in lucent cloud,
Spher'd visible, the Glory of the Lord
Dazzles the courts, and dwells within the veil.

"And now to Heaven alone (for nought can earth
Of equal boast) turn heart and eye and soul.
What greater KING, what brighter habitant,
In latter days from princely Judah born,
The Serpent's victor, Bethlehem's Morning Star,
Must Israel rule, and in the temple shine,
Futurity shall tell; while earth redeem'd,
And heaven rejoicing, wonder and adore."

The voice no more is heard: yet list'ning still,
In trance extatic, Moses feebly lifts
His palsied hands, death's damp and chill embrace
Convulsing every nerve; thick darkness seals
Each eyeball, and his vigorous feet confess
Total decrepitude: never to rise
Till storm and thunder and the trump of God
All nations of the grave to judgement call,
He prostrate sinks; yet unimpair'd retains
Meek resignation, faith, seraphic love,
Hope antedating heaven: in speechless praise,
Thanksgiving, prayer, dissolving life expires:
When straight a mighty warrior (such his charge),
Michael, of arch-angelic thrones the prime,
Solemn descends; at whose imperial voice
Attendant Cherubim, on gorgeous wings,
The sacred corpse upbear to secret vale
Of sepulture; where reverently inhum'd,
In tomb for ever hid from search profane,
The man of God in Moab's conscious dust
For resurrection waits. Ethereal harps,
And hymns ethereal, thus the requiem sing:—

"Prophet and Saint, of God and man belov'd,
Judge of the race elect: thy memory,

By long regret and grateful praise embalm'd,
From father still to son transmitted down
In parable and song, shall record bear
To latest time, and by example teach
Hebrew and Gentile: such the privilege
Of virtue, whose pure essence no decay
Nor dim eclipse can change; more durable
Than adamantine rock; than mid-day sun
More glorious and serene. To highest deeds
Predestin'd from the womb, thy pensive youth
Convers'd with knowledge, fathoming all depths
Of human lore; yet hung'ring and athirst
For heavenly wisdom, and with stedfast heart,
'Mid peril and temptation and dismay,
Adoring Jacob's God. A mortal arm,
Vicegerent o'er inferior spheres ordain'd,
Astonish'd angels saw, when thy rebuke
Spread anguish, desolation, and despair,
O'er Egypt's confines; and through baffled waves
Of ocean led, as through the wilderness,
The fugitives of Goshen. On the mount
Of Sinai, whose foundations shook, whose top
Was lost in smoke and fire, while Seraphim
At distance gaz'd, full forty days and nights,

Guest of terrestrial mould, didst thou sojourn
Within the dread pavilion and the veil
Of cloud and tempest; there, as face to face,
In visions of beatitude rejoice,
Past utt'rance, till thy countenance imbib'd
Transcendent splendors. As on outspread plume
The parent eagle bears her callow young,
Instructs, defends them; so, by Heaven's command,
Through the waste howling desert hast thou led,
Through heat and cold, through weary pilgrimage,
Through violence and war, to Jordan's banks,
Th' inheritors of Canaan. Great thy toils,
And faithful thine obedience: now reward
Succeeds; and on thy soul imparadis'd
The crown of glory and the excess of joy
Immeasureably show'rs down. But Israel mourns
Through all his tribes, and comfort scarce receives
From dearest hope; though long-expected realms
Invite his grasp, and instant promises
To glad possession, wealth, and conquest, call.
Lament not Israel: in his hallowed Law
Thy monitor surviving, yet proclaims
Creative majesty, sustaining love,
And counsels of salvation, oracles

Of immortality, which who frequents
Inherits light and life; and from the mount
Of Faith, the spiritual Pisgah, views
His destin'd patrimony, (where no pain
Intrudes, where sin and sorrow never dwell,)
Celestial Canaan: thence conceiving strength,
Onward he moves, refulgent in the vest
Of righteousness, in panoply all arm'd
Of piety and truth: through famine, sword,
And persecution, dauntless; to the glare
Of guilty power, to thousand blandishments,
Wealth, honour, luxury, careless and unmov'd;
And spotless from the world. The widow's eye
Beholds him, and bears witness; orphans hear,
And bless his name. As evening sacrifice
His prayers arise; nor less at early dawn
And thoughtful noon, like incense clouds, perfume
Heaven's altars, and the sanctuary divine.
In poverty content, in affluence meek,
In health in sickness mindful of thy God,
(Whom ever-fearing, thou canst fear no ill,)
Blest fellow-servant, to th' eternal hills
Thou tread'st the way, and, willing guardians, we
Thy steps attend: palms incorruptible

Wait thee from murky chambers of the tomb,
Rising, with acclamation, to salute
Thy kindred saints, and without end extol,
In bliss ineffable, the SAVIOUR's name."